

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 05280 091606Z

43

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DIA WASHDC

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 5280

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

REF: LISBON 5272

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES AND PRIME MINISTER DESIGNATE AZEVEDO HAVE ASKED MEMBERS OF FIFTH PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT TO STAY ON UNTIL SEPT 11, THE ANNOUNCED TARGET DATE FOR SWEARING IN OF NEW GOVERNMENT. DISCUSSIONS WITH PARTIES ARE CONTINUING WITH SOCIALISTS, WHO ARE MAINTAINING TOUGH POSITION, THE KEY TO A SOLUTION. J-5 REPORT ON EVENTS SURROUNDING MARCH 11 COUP ATTZMPT WAS PUBLISHED BY COMMUNIST-LINING "DIARIO POPULAR" SEPT 8. REPORT ATTACKED ROLE OF ARMY CHIEF FABIAO, PS, AND SOARES, AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS. SPINOLA ACTIVITIES IN PARIS CONTINUE TO RECEIVE PLAY. DEMONSTRATION BY LEFTIST SOLDIERS ORGANIZATION
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PAGE 02 LISBON 05280 091606Z

IS SCHEDULED FOR SEPT 10 IN OPORTO. END SUMMARY

1. NEW GOVERNMENT SEPT 10?: COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FIFTH PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THAT, AT REQUEST OF PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES AND PRIME MINISTER DESIGNATE PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO, IT WILL REMAIN IN CARETAKER STATUS UNTIL SEPT 10, WHEN NEW GOVERNMENT IS EXPECTED TO TAKE OFFICE. PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO, CONTINUING HIS EFFORTS TO FORM NEW GOVERNMENT, MET FOR SEVERAL HOURS ON SEPT 8 WITH TOP PS LEADERS INCLUDING SOARES AND SALGADO ZENHA. NEGOTIATIONS REVOLVE AROUND SEPT 6 PS RESPONSE TO AZEVEDO PROGRAM FOR NEW GOVERNMENT. WE UNDERSTAND PS IS HOLDING OUT FOR ASSURANCES THAT GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC POLICY WILL BE IN LINE WITH PS ECONOMIC PROGRAM RELEASED TWO WEEKS AGO AND THAT POLITICAL ORIENTATION OF GOVERNMENT WILL BE ACCEPTABLE TO PS. DIVISION OF CABINET PORTFOLIO IS LESSER, MORE MANAGEABLE ISSUE. SEPTEMBER 7 PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO MEETINGS WITH MDP/CDE, PPD AND PCP WERE APPARENTLY HELD TO GIVE THESE PARTIES OPPORTUNITY TO REACT TO PS PROPOSALS.

2. J-5 ATTACKS FABIAO: SEPT. 8 EDITION OF "DIARIO POPULAR" CARRIED SLANTED REPORT ON EVENTS SURROUNDING MARCH 11 COUP ATTEMPT PREPARED BY COMMUNIST-LINING J-5 OR ARMED FORCES GENERAL STAFF. REPORT IS SHARPLY CRITICAL OF ROLE OF ARMY CHIEF FABIAO, WHO IT ALLEGES ISSUED ORDERS TO REFUSE ARMS TO J-5 WHEN J-5 SOUGHT TO DEFEND COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES FROM SPINOLISTA SUPPORTERS. REPORT ALSO SUGGESTED SOARES, PS, AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS PLAYED SINISTER BUT UNSPECIFIED ROLE IN MARCH 11 EVENTS.

3. SPINOLA: INDEPENDENT "A CAPITAL" REPORTED ON SEPT 8 THAT SPINOLA MET IN PARIS OVER THE WEEKEND WITH PORTUGUESE MILITARY, PRINCIPALLY CAPTAINS, SOME OF WHOM PAPER SAID HAD ARRIVED IN PARIS FROM ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE TO SEE SPINOLA. PRESS ALSO REPORTED THAT NATIONAL GUARD ARRESTED THREE SPANIARDS AND ONE PORTUGUESE SEPT. 6 IN LISBON AREA WITH ASSORTED SMALL ARMS ON SUSPICION OF TERRORIST ACTIVITIES.

4. "SOLDIERS UNITED SHALL WIN" (SOLDADOS UNIDOS VENCERAO--SUV) A LEFTIST, SELF-STYLED "ANTI-REACTIONARY" ORGANIZATION OF ACTIVE DUTY SOLDIERS, IS PROMOTING A DEMONSTRATION IN OPORTO SEPT 10. SUV CHARACTERISTICS REPORTED IN DAO IR 6 879 0451 75 SEPT 8.

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PAGE 03 LISBON 05280 091606Z

5. COMMENT: BOTH SOCIALISTS AND PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO KNOW THAT PS PARTICIPATION IN NEW GOVERNMENT IS ESSENTIAL. THERE ARE INCREASING SIGNS TODAY (SEPT 9) THAT AZEVEDO MAY SUCCEED IN PUTTING TOGETHER A GOVERNMENT DESPITE THE HARD LINE THAT THE PS AND PPD HAVE BEEN TAKING AND THE INCOMPATIBILITY OF THE PCP AND THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES (SEPTEL). THE PPD AND PS PRESUMABLY ARE AWARE THAT TOO INTRANSIGENT A STANCE COULD ENDANGER SOME OF GAINS ALREADY MADE BY ANTUNES GROUP AND FURTHER FEED ANTI-PARTY

SENTIMENTS WHICH ARE ALREADY STRONG WITHIN BOTH RC AND AFM.
EXCESSIVE BRAVADO, SUCH AS THAT EXHIBITED IN OPORTO LAST WEEKEND
BY PPD, IS PARTICULARLY UNHELPFUL.

6. LEAK OF J-5 DOCUMENT IS HEAVY-HANDED ATTEMPT BY J-5 PERSONNEL
TO TAKE DOWN WITH THEM AS MANY OF THEIR ENEMIES AS POSSIBLE.

7. PLANNED SOLDIERS' DEMONSTRATION IN OPORTO IS FURTHER
CHALLENGE TO FRAYED MILITARY DISCIPLINE. IF IT IS HELD, NEWLY
RESTRUCTURED REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL MAY ORDER DIS-
CIPLINARY ACTION.
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